

**CLAIMS:**

1. A method for preventing out-of-ordering of frames in a network switch, comprising the steps of:

receiving a first portion of a string of packets from a source port on a first port;

transferring said first portion of said string of packets to a second port for transmission to a destination;

sending an indicator from said first port to said second port;

receiving said indicator at said second port;

sending a response indicator from said second port to said first port;

and

receiving a second portion of said string of packets from said source port on a third port.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step of sending the response indicator further comprises the step of determining if said first portion of said string of packets transferred to said second port has been transmitted to said destination prior to sending said response indicator.

3. A method for preventing out-of-ordering of frames in network switch, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving packets on a first ingress port from a source port;

transmitting said packets from said first ingress port to an egress port for transmission to a destination;

determining to switch said receiving of said packets to a second ingress port;

sending a switch indicator from said first ingress port to said egress port;

determining when to send a response switch indicator from said egress port to said first ingress port;

sending said response switch indicator from said egress port to said first ingress port;

forwarding said response switch indicator to said source port; and

switching said receiving of said packets to said second ingress port.

4. The method recited in claim 3, wherein said step of determining when to send a response switch indicator further comprises the step of waiting to send said response switch indicator until a number of packets in said egress port are transmitted from said egress port to said destination.